

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 232659

10

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AMEMBASSY RANGOON

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 232659

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, NP, IN, US

SUBJECT: NEPALESE AMBASSADOR KHANAL'S CALL ON ASSISTANT
SECRETARY ATHERTON

RANGOON FOR AMBASSADOR CARGO

1. SUMMARY: IN CALL ON ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON
OCTOBER 22, KHANAL EXPRESSED HOPE SECRETARY'S VISIT
TO SOUTH ASIA WOULD IMPROVE GENERAL CLIMATE IN AREA,
ASSERTED GON HAD NO DESIRE TO SPOIL THEIR RELATIONS
WITH INDIA, ALTHOUGH THERE WAS APPREHENSION OVER
SIKKIM DEVELOPMENTS. ATHERTON PLACED SECRETARY'S VISIT
IN CONTEXT OF TREND OF DEVELOPING NEW RELATIONSHIP
WITH INDIA, ASSURED KHANAL THAT IMPROVED INDO-U.S.
RELATIONS WOULD NOT BE AT EXPENSE OF U.S. TIES WITH
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 STATE 232659

ANY OTHER COUNTRY IN AREA, AND REITERATED OUR INTENTION

TO SEND HIGH LEVEL DELEGATION TO CORONATION. END SUMMARY.

2. NEPALESE AMBASSADOR KHANAL, ACCOMPANIED BY FIRST SECRETARY RIMAL, CALLED ON ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON OCTOBER 22. KUX AND LORTON SAT IN.

3. AFTER CONVEYING GON'S APPRECIATION FOR ATHERTON'S STATEMENT ON NEPAL BEFORE HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS SUB-COMMITTEE ON THE NEAR EAST AND SOUTH ASIA SEPTEMBER 19

(GON WAS "EXTREMELY HAPPY" WITH STATEMENT), KHANAL SAID GON WANTED IMPROVEMENT IN RELATIONS BETWEEN INDIA AND NEPAL, INDIA AND U.S., AND INDIA AND CHINA TO REDUCE TENSIONS IN AREA, AND HOPED SECRETARY'S VISIT WOULD IMPROVE GENERAL CLIMATE IN SOUTH ASIA. ATHERTON SAID SECRETARY'S VISIT TO INDIA SHOULD BE SEEN IN CONTEXT OF EFFORTS TO DEVELOP NORMAL AND MATURE INDO-AMERICAN RELATIONSHIP WHICH WE HOPED ALL COUNTRIES IN AREA WOULD SEE IN THEIR INTEREST AS WELL. KHANAL AGREED. ATHERTON ADDED IT WAS NOT OUR INTENTION TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH INDIA AT EXPENSE OF ANY OTHER COUNTRY.

4. NOTING TIME CONSTRAINTS HAD PREVENTED SECRETARY FROM VISITING NEPAL ON THIS TRIP, ATHERTON AT SAME TIME REITERATED OUR INTENTION TO SEND A HIGH LEVEL DELEGATION TO CORONATION TO DEMONSTRATE IMPORTANCE WE ATTACH TO THAT EVENT.

5. DESCRIBING NEPALESE APPREHENSION, "PARTICULARLY AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE", WHICH FOLLOWED INDIA'S CHANGING STATUS OF SIKKIM AND RESULTED IN "SPONTANEOUS DEMONSTRATIONS," KHANAL ASSERTED THAT NONETHELESS THE GON HAD NO INTENTION "TO SPOIL" RELATIONS WITH INDIA, WHICH WERE AS IMPORTANT AS ALWAYS. HE SUGGESTED, HOWEVER, THAT IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF INDIA UNDERSTOOD NEPALESE FEELINGS BETTER. ATHERTON ASSURED KHANAL HE WOULD MAKE CERTAIN SECRETARY WAS AWARE OF NEPALESE VIEWS.

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PAGE 03 STATE 232659

6. TURNING TO AID, KHANAL SAID GON WAS VERY APPRECIATIVE OF U.S. ATTITUDE OF SUPPORT FOR ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE FOR THE INDEPENDENT DEVELOPMENT OF NEPAL. INDIA, HOWEVER, HAD ATTIMES EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT SOME FOREIGN AID COMPETED WITH INDIAN AID. KHANAL SAID IT WAS GON'S INTENTION THAT FOREIGN ASSISTANCE SHOULD BE COMPLEMENTARY BUT WOULD NOT WANT THIS DETERMINED ELSEWHERE THAN IN NEPAL AND WOULD NOT WELCOME THIRD

PARTY CONSULTATIONS ON AID MATTERS. ATHERTON ASSURED HIM THAT U.S. AID DECISIONS WERE TAKEN ONLY IN THE CONTEXT OF U.S.-NEPAL BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP.

7. IN CLOSING, KHANAL INQUIRED ABOUT REPORTS OF RENEWED PL-480 FOOD AID TO INDIA. ALTHOUGH COMMERCIAL SHIPMENTS WERE UNDERWAY, ATHERTON SAID THERE HAD BEEN NO ANNOUNCEMENT ON PL-480 AS YET. HE ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT HE ANTICIPATED PLANS TO ALLOCATE SOME PL-480 FOODGRAINS DURING SECOND QUARTER FY 75 WOULD BE ANNOUNCED WITHIN A FEW DAYS, PROBABLY BEFORE VISIT TO INDIA BEGINS. KISSINGER

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